



NSPS Newsletter

AF National Security Personnel System Office
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Current Status

National Security Personnel System (NSPS) Lawsuit Status

In November, a coalition of unions filed a lawsuit regarding provisions of NSPS.

As a result of discussions among the Department of Defense (DoD) and Department of Justice, the Office of Personnel Management and the labor organizations, an agreement was reached on a schedule that will lead to the expeditious resolution of the issues raised in the lawsuit. DoD agreed to delay implementing portions of NSPS until 1 February 2006 and labor organizations agreed to begin the continuing collaboration process for the implementing issuances in December 2005. These issuances will not be effective until 1 February 2006 at the earliest.

In addition, the agreement provides for the commencement or continuation of NSPS training of DoD managers, supervisors, and employees at any time.

The court has agreed to hear the case on 24 January 2006.

NSPS Timeline

DoD completed the mandated 30-day congressional notification period and is now involved in the 30-day continuing collaboration period with union representatives over the NSPS implementing issuances.

Beginning in early 2006, employees at those installations implementing NSPS first will begin receiving training on the system.

On or around 1 February 2006, the Labor Relations System will be implemented across DoD, to be followed by the phased implementation of the NSPS Human Resources System.

If the schedule remains as is, employees in Spirals 1.1 and 1.2 will enter the NSPS Performance Management System on 1 March. By that time, supervisors will have prepared NSPS performance plans for their employees. Data system conversion is scheduled for early spring. Spiral 1.3 is scheduled for fall.

Over the next two or three years, DoD will incrementally phase-in the next two spirals: Spiral 2 includes the rest of the eligible DoD civilian workforce, including wage system and overseas employees. Spiral 3 will include DoD laboratories, if legislative restrictions are lifted.

Remember that implementation is event driven and dates are subject to change.

Draft NSPS Implementing Issuances available

The draft NSPS implementing issuances—detailed documents outlining how NSPS will be implemented—have been published and are available on-line at the [DoD website](#).

Since the implementing issuances are detailed, they are also lengthy. The DoD site breaks the document into smaller sections that clearly identifies subject matter, making it easier for employees to select topics they may have special interest in for review.

Training

Over 745 Air Force employees have received train-the-trainer (T3) instruction on NSPS, with additional T3 training classes scheduled for January and February.

These employees traveled to central training sites for DoD and AF-sponsored training on all aspects of the new system. Once trained, they returned to their installations to facilitate on-site NSPS instructions for all employees prior to implementation of the system. Training for those installations converting to NSPS in early 2006 is expected to begin in January.

In addition to the T3 initiative, 4,680 supervisors and managers have received NSPS-sponsored supervisory skills training and nearly 11,000 employees have completed Softskills training.

NSPS Need-To-Know Information

One aspect of NSPS that will become apparent immediately upon conversion to the new HR System is the simplification of classification. NSPS replaces the General Schedule (GS) with broad pay bands and the old terminology with the new:

- ◆ Occupational Series will be called *Occupational Code* (minor change)
- ◆ Occupational family will be replaced by *Career Groups*
- ◆ Pay Plans will be called *Pay Schedules*
- ◆ Grades will be replaced with *Pay Bands*

Regardless of current pay, employees will convert into a pay band based on his or her permanent grade of record.

Career Groups



Career groups (CGs) are broad groupings of occupations performing similar types of work with similar progression patterns. There are four career groups in NSPS: **Standard (STND CG)**, **Scientific and Engineering (S&E CG)**, **Medical (MED CG)**, and **Investigative and Protective Services (I&P CG)**.

The Standard Career Group (STND CG) includes all occupations not covered by a specialized CG. Approximately 70% of all employees will be in the STND CG.



Old / Legacy Series

0201 Human Resources Spec
0861 Aerospace Engineer
0610 Nurse
1811 Criminal Investigator

New / NSPS Career Group

STND CG
S&E CG
MED CG
I&P CG

Pay Schedules



Pay Schedules (PSs) replace what we now call pay plans.

GS is one of the pay plans under the legacy system. Once an employee who is now a “GS” employee converts to NSPS, that employee will no longer be covered by the GS pay plan. Instead, the employee will be placed in one of the NSPS PSs.

PSs combine similar types of work within a CG. Each CG is divided into multiple PSs, and each PS has a unique NSPS PS code. The PSs are

- ◆ Professional and Analytical
- ◆ Technician / Support
- ◆ Supervisory
- ◆ Student

Remember that each CG has several PSs attached to it. The PS for STND CG and the PS for MED CG, for example, have the same structure but are different because the *range of salary* available for each PS is different (reflecting different market values), as will the two-digit code that is used to identify the PS.



Since most of us will end up in the STND CG, let’s look more closely at how CGs and PSs work together under NSPS, using as an example an employee working in Human Resources.

There are four PSs in the STND CG each with varying pay bands (PBs). (The next topic will provide more information on PBs.) Each PS is identified by a two-digit code.

- ◆ **STND CG- Professional/Analytical PS (YA).** This PS includes positions in both professional (requiring education) and analytical occupations and consists of three PBs.
- ◆ **STND CG – Technical/Support PS (YB).** This PS comprises technician and support work and includes three PBs.
- ◆ **STND CG – Supervisor/Managers PS (YC).** Employees who supervise work in the STND CG are classified in this schedule. To be considered a supervisor, an employee must have responsibility for assessing and rating the performance of a subordinate workforce. There are three PBs.
- ◆ **STND CG – Student Educational Employment PS (YP).** This PS is established to provide a pay rate range in a single PB for employees covered by the Student Educational Employment Program (SEEP).

<i>Human Resources Occupation</i>	<i>Career Group</i>	<i>NSPS Pay Schedule</i>	<i>Code</i>	<i>Legacy Pay Plan</i>
HR Specialist	STND	Professional/Analytical	YA	GS
HR Technician	STND	Technical/Support	YB	GS
HR Supervisor	STND		YC	GS
Student Trainee	STND	SEEP	YP	GS

Pay Bands



Pay Bands (PBs) are the final component to job classification under NSPS. In the new system, PBs replace grades.

PBs combine a range of work into a discrete level. The NSPS pay system establishes a pay range for each PB, with a minimum and maximum pay rate.

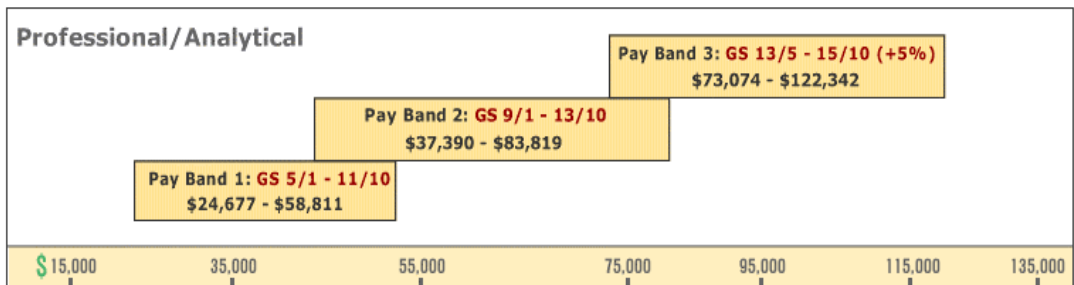
A sample of a PB for the STND CG is provided below; other CGs have similar features but their PBs will have different ranges of minimum and maximum salaries. Note that pay bands are still subject to continuing collaboration and the final product may not be the same as the samples below. Also, to help orient the new and the old, GS equivalents have been annotated on the samples but this is for information only.

*Regardless of current pay, employees will convert into a pay band based on his or her permanent grade of record **and not salary**.*



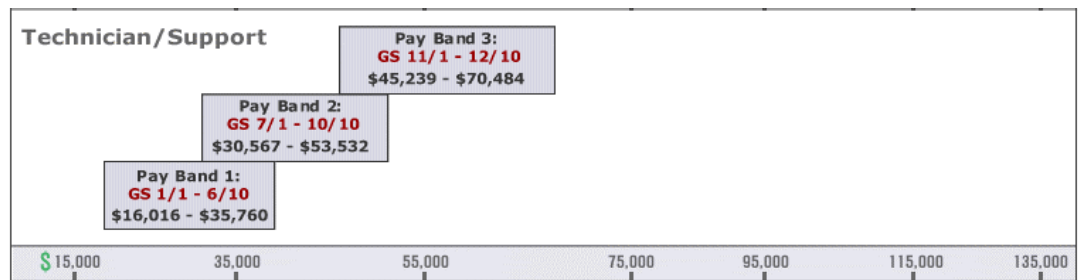
The STND CG has four PSs (Professional, Technician/Support, Supervisor/Manager, and Student). The Student PS provides for a pay range in a single CG for employees in a covered program; that PB is not displayed.

STND CG Professional/Analytical PS (YA) consists of three PBs: PB 1 is for entry and developmental positions only; PB 2 is for work at the full-performance level; and PB3 is for expert work.



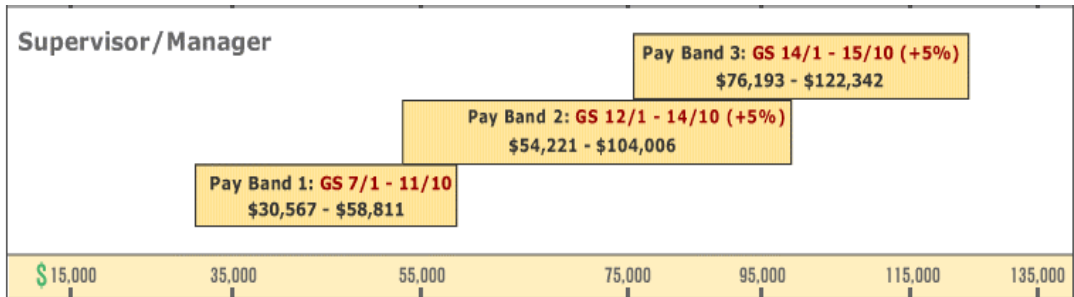
All Pay Bands subject to change; GS grades used as reference only

STND CG – Technician/Support PS (YB) includes three PBs. PBs 1 and 2 represent typical full-performance work; PB 3 is expert work.



All Pay Bands subject to change; GS grades used as reference only

STND CG – Supervisor/Manager (YC) includes three PBs. Assignment to a pay band is determined by factors such as type and level of work supervised and level of supervision (immediate, intermediate, or manager).



All Pay Bands subject to change; GS grades used as reference only

Putting it all together



Read more on conversion into NSPS in the draft [Implementing Issuances](#)

Remember:

- ◆ NSPS uses Career Groups (CG) rather than occupational series
- ◆ There are four CGs: *Standard (STND CG)*, *Scientific and Engineering (S&E CG)*, *Medical (MED CG)*, and *Investigative and Protective Services (I&P CG)*
- ◆ Each CG (except the STND CG) is divided into three Pay Schedules (PSs): Professional and Analytical, Technician/Support, and Supervisory. Additionally, the STND CG includes the Student PS.
- ◆ Each PS within a CG is further divided into Pay Bands (PBs) and each has a unique two-digit identifier. Each PB has a minimum and maximum salary range. PBs are unique to their CG and PS.

Examples:

Legacy System	NSPS
Series: Human Resources Spec	Career Group: Standard
Pay Plan: GS	Pay Schedule: Professional / Analytical YA
Grade: 11	Pay Band: 2

Legacy System	NSPS
Series: Engineering Tech	Career Group: Scientific and Engineering
Pay Plan: GS	Pay Schedule: Technician/Support YE
Grade: 06	Pay Band: 1

**Excerpt from
Interview:
Sharon
Seymour**

The National Security Personnel System, which will go online soon, will provide a more performance- and market-based system of hiring, pay and evaluation.

With NSPS, Department of Defense civilians can influence the amount of money they will receive by their performance, their value to the organization and the mission accomplishment contributions, said Sharon Seymour, the Air Force associate director of personnel plans and integration for NSPS.

DOD will request input from union representatives regarding the details of pay banding, staffing, performance management and other aspects of the new system. This period is called continuing collaboration and is expected to end in January 2006.

Implementation of the NSPS will then begin and continue throughout the year. On-site training for supervisors and employees is part of the NSPS implementation plan. By March 2006, the Air Force expects 50,000 employees to be covered under the new NSPS, Ms. Seymour said.

Under NSPS, classification will be simplified and streamlined and will include broad groupings of occupations based on the nature of work, career patterns and market factors. These groupings are called "pay bands." These pay schedules will replace the current GS and, eventually, the wage system pay schedule.

"As we move toward implementation, civilians will receive more information about where they fit in the pay schedules under NSPS," Ms. Seymour said.

AF NEWS

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